

From the Director

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The Eagle

Voluntary Service Central Office Newsletter
Leaders in Volunteer Management

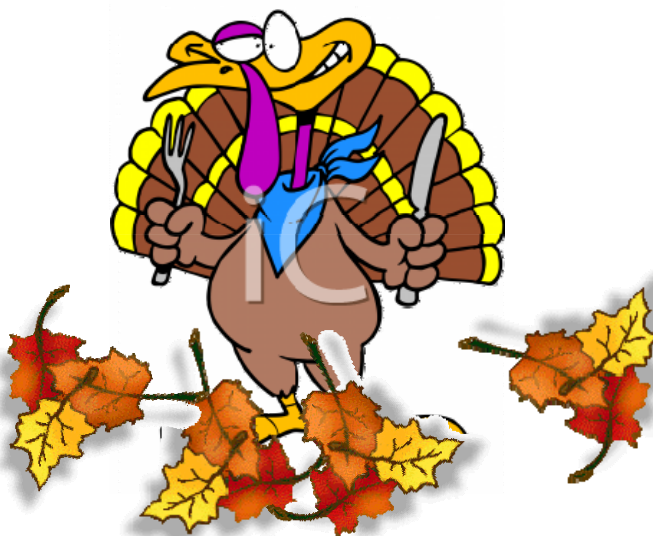
I take this opportunity to thank the volunteers and VA staff for assisting veterans in exercising their Constitutional right to vote. As of October 31st, 9,119 information posters were displayed around VA facilities to encourage veterans to vote; 216,286 flyers were distributed in comfort kits and welcome packages; 1,055 volunteers have assisted more than 4,976 outpatients and 4,994 inpatients in registering; and had the assistance of 83 non-partisan groups. I am tremendously grateful for the dedication and sincerity of our volunteers and staff.

Many heart warming stories have been related to me over the past few months. A veteran was admitted to the Community Living Center at VA Butler Healthcare System at the end of last week. The patient lives almost an hour from the facility. This week, one of the nurses on his unit contacted the Butler VAVS office to relate that the veteran was extremely disappointed that he would not be able to vote this year. He had voted in every election since becoming eligible. He even ran for offices in his local community and was a 'write-in' candidate once — which he won and served the position proudly.

A volunteer driver was in the VAVS office when the call came in. The volunteer is from the same area as the veteran. After some discussion, the volunteer agreed to return on Tuesday and take the veteran to vote. A respiratory therapist and the veteran's wife accompanied him for assistance. The patient was very happy that he and his wife were able to vote and he was grateful for the assistance.

Stories like this happened throughout the country. Please extend my sincere thanks to the staff and volunteers for a job well done.

Louise B. Belser





St. John's University Service Day: Team IT

Yvette Cintron, VAVS Brooklyn

Service Day is an annual event celebrated by the university for the seven years. Held on or about the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul, the founder of the Vincentian Community which sponsors St. John's, volunteers work together to keep the vision of St. Vincent alive and experience the fulfillment of giving of oneself to another.

Students, faculty, administrators, staff and alumni from all St. John's New York campuses spread throughout the New York City and Nassau and Suffolk counties.

This year, administrators and staff from the Information Technology department formed "Team IT". While members of IT had participated in University Service Day in prior years, this marked the first year that the department participated as its own team. The coordinators, Jan Melville and Debbie Semar, sought out an opportunity to work with an organization which serves America's military. The team specifically wanted an opportunity that would enable them to show support and appreciation to those who have sacrificed so much.

That opportunity was presented by Yvette Cintron and Russell Dolecal at the VA Extended Care facility at St. Albans, Queens. The bowling alley at the facility had been out of service for five years and was in need of repair. The team of 13 members from St. John's mopped, scrubbed and scraped until the lanes looked sparkling (well, almost). The team left exhausted and dirty, but with a good feeling about their accomplishment. All look forward to coming back next year with a larger team and a new project to embark on as they follow in the footsteps of St. Vincent DePaul.



Military Order of the Purple Heart Donates Sepulveda, California

The Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 83, continues to look out for San Fernando vets at the Sepulveda VA Ambulatory Care Center. In preparation of the coming Winter, they assembled \$500.00 worth of T-shirts, socks and underwear for needy and homeless vets in the valley. They presented the donation to VA Sepulveda Voluntary Service to be placed in the clothing room.

Presenting the assembled men's items to the VA are Luis Rivera, VN Veteran and Chapter Commander of the Purple Heart along with some of his Chapter members.



Photo by Larry Wong

VAVS Staff Attends Association for Health-care Volunteer Resource Professionals



L-R: Ronni Miller, Durham VAMC; Belinda Karabatsos, Salt Lake City VAMC, Doug Bowers, Central Arkansas VA HCS; and Cindy Seals, Leavenworth VAMC, at the banquet.



L-R: Cindy Seals, Leavenworth VAMC; Sharon Croteau, VA New England HCS; and Steve Moynihan, Minneapolis VAMC, at the banquet.






*God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds
today. Have you used one to say "thank you?"
~William A. Ward*



American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month

NOVEMBER

						1 All Saints Day (O, P, RC)
2	3	4  Election Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Veteran's Day 	12 Baha'u'llah's Birthday (Ba)	13	14	15 Annual VAVS Narrative Report Due
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Thanksgiving 	28	29
30 First Sunday of Advent (C)						

"We in this country have not lost our sense of obligation to those who have served in our most recent war. And on a day like today when we think of all those who have gone before us we reaffirm our commitment and our respect for all of our veterans from all of our wars. "

~Remarks by Max Cleland, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Day National Ceremony, November 11, 1979

Mr. Cleland's words are still valid today as we approach Veterans Day 2008. Those of us in VA Voluntary Service salute each and every American veteran for the sacrifices you have made for us.

Each conflict has its own method and statement. But each veteran...is a hero.

Thank you.

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